

THE ASYLUM

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Numismatic Bibliomania Society

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*Books are not men
and yet they are alive,
They are man's memory
and his aspiration,
The link between his present
and his past,
The tools he builds with.*

Stephen Vincent Benét
1898–1943

numislit.com



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The Asylum

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Front cover: Portrait sketch of Emmanuel J. Attinelli.



Introducing Emmanuel J. Attinelli

The lead article in this issue is about Emmanuel J. Attinelli and his classic work, *Numisgraphics*, which lists all auction catalogues with numismatic content issued in the United States from the beginning through the year 1875. The interest in auction catalogues was rabid at the time, attracting the attention of most of the leading collectors and most of the major dealers. Attinelli interspersed his listings with biographical vignettes and salty comments, thus providing a fairly thorough picture of the hobby in its formative years.

For good reasons and bad, interest in catalogues faded in the last decade of the nineteenth century and was not reborn until the 1960s. Modern collectors tended to focus on the glitzier (and, be it said, more useful) items, such as plated Chapmans and hardcover editions of modern sales. Respect for the past, as represented by Attinelli and his contemporaries, was largely lost in the shuffle.

This writer believes that our overlooking of the world of Attinelli is a bibliophilic mistake of the first magnitude. With the current issue, we seek to begin to correct that mistake but “begin” is the operative word. At a minimum, there will follow lead articles on this subject in issues 3 and 4 of this volume of *The Asylum*. These will be joined by a comprehensive book on the subject and, we would hope, a veritable flood of responses and related articles.

“Attinelli” has two meanings. The first names an historical figure, undoubtedly the first bibliomaniac of many to follow. The second meaning references a modern disease, one characterized by irresistible fascination with things past. We must warn you that this disease is communicable and that you will be exposed to a heavy dose of it in the pages to follow.

—John W. Adams

Numisgraphics—The Flesh and The Spirit

John W. Adams

In 1876, Emmanuel J. Attinelli published *Numisgraphics*, or as it is more properly titled, *Numisgraphics, or a List of Catalogues in Which Occur Coins or Medals Which Have Been Sold by Auction in the United States, Also, a List of Catalogues or Price Lists of Coins, Issued by Dealers, Also, a List of Publications of More or Less Interest to Numismatologists, Which Have Been Published in the United States*. The book has attained a measure of renown amongst bibliophiles: it was ranked 59th in the NBS survey of the 100 Greatest Items of United States Numismatic Literature.¹ That modest ranking grossly underestimates its true worth, suggesting that it is both under-owned and under-read. We will attempt to give readers a more proper appreciation of the book. Our thoughts on the matter are gathered into two sections—"The Flesh", which deals with tangible dimensions, and "The Spirit", which moves into a more challenging realm.

THE FLESH

Emmanuel J. Attinelli (1832–1895) does not appear to have followed the beaten path. For one, writing a book on literature (auction catalogues) rather than coins or medals was even more unusual then than it would be now. For another, despite being an ardent hobbyist and a resident of New York City and despite having contacted a number of members during the course of writing his book, he did not join the American Numismatic Society until May 1885.²

As early as 1880, William E. Woodward, the most knowledgeable bibliophile of his day, was calling *Numisgraphics* "Excessively rare".³ We

¹ Leonard Augsburger, "The One Hundred Greatest Items of United States Numismatic Literature: A Survey of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society, Part 2", *The Asylum* 27, no. 2 (2009), p. 68.

² NumismaticMall, website of Dr. John N. Lupia III (<http://sites.google.com/site/numismaticmallcom>); see his biography of Attinelli.

³ Woodward catalogue, December 8–9, 1880, lot 641.

NUMISGRAPHICS,
OR
A List of Catalogues,
IN WHICH OCCUR
COINS OR MEDALS,
WHICH HAVE BEEN SOLD BY AUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES,
ALSO,
A List of Catalogues or Price Lists of Coins,
ISSUED BY DEALERS,
ALSO,
A LIST OF VARIOUS PUBLICATIONS OF MORE OR LESS INTEREST TO
NUMISMATOLOGISTS, WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN
THE UNITED STATES,
COMPILED BY
E. J. ATTINELLI.
"
PRICE, TWO DOLLARS.
NEW YORK.
1876.

Figure 1.

theorize that the author was not beaming his work toward the bestseller list, having a different ambition. None of the leading dealers of the day offered the book for sale—not Cogan, not Strobridge, and not the most logical outlet, William E. Woodward. Indeed, only one advertisement of the book has been located.⁴ From this lack of effort to commercialize, it seems apparent that Attinelli intended merely to share the fruits of his labors with known enthusiasts, saving a few copies for others who might come along. It is also possible that the author's stock was ravaged by fire or flood, but we favor the explanation of a deliberately low-key distribution, the prerogative of one who self-publishes.

As we shall see below, the collecting of auction catalogues in the 1870s was a far more important specialty than it was to be at any time thereafter. Given that Attinelli had published a definitive book on this popular subject, one might have expected him to achieve more renown than appears to have been the case. Our search has uncovered no speeches by him, no letters to the editor with suggested additions, no contemporary commentary of any sort and, indeed, only one review. The lack of publicity surrounding *Numisgraphics* suggests a man of extreme modesty, if not shyness. Thus, along with a low-key business plan, Attinelli's personality may well have contributed to the scarcity of the book.

Today we can account for only a relative handful of copies. Institutional holdings include:

- American Numismatic Society (2)
- Boston Public Library (2) [These two copies may have disappeared]
- Boston Athenaeum
- Free Library of Philadelphia
- Harvard University
- Lehigh University
- New York Public Library
- Yale University

No doubt this list could be expanded somewhat, added to which there may be perhaps fifteen in private hands, this judging by appearances at auction, of which we count eight in the past 25 years by the redoubtable George Kolbe,⁵ two by Charlie Davis, one by Cal Wilson, and one by Bowers and Merena.

⁴ J. W. Adams, foreword to Quarterman reprint of *Numismgraphics* (Lawrence, Mass.: Quarterman, 1976), p. vi.

⁵ E-mail from G. F. Kolbe, February 17, 2013.

The first section of the book, by far the most important of the three sections, is a list of numismatic auction catalogues from 1828 to 1875. There are 420 listings plus addenda, including both broadsides as well as multi-page offerings. Given that so many of the entries have minimal numismatic content, the list has a flavor of lemons as well as apples and oranges. Modern enthusiasts have discovered another 33 catalogues that Attinelli missed; none of this number has material content but, for the sake of completeness, all are included in an appendix below.

The author began his list with the June 1828 auction of the collection of Benjamin H. Watkins of Salem, Massachusetts. As presumably the first numismatic sale in the United States, the Watkins broadside has been pursued by collectors with Captain Ahab-like intensity. Sadly, only two original examples have been found, one in the Essex Institute in Salem and the other in the holdings of the American Numismatic Society. The ANS also owns a photolithographic reproduction of the original executed by Attinelli, who tells us that a "very few copies" of this latter were made.⁶ Sadly, no other examples have been discovered, inspiring Mr. Daniel Hamelberg of Champaign, Illinois, to print a "second restrike", which will be made available in a limited edition and which may slake some of the unrequited demand for an original.

As matters turn out, the fuss over Watkins can be justified by tradition but not by the facts. Back in 1982, then doctoral candidate Joel J. Orosz came across startling information previously unknown to the numismatic world. In studying the Swiss émigré Pierre Eugène du Simitière, Orosz learned that his subject was not only a renowned painter of miniature portraits, including the most widely used image of George Washington of the day, but also a numismatist of substantial achievements. To our purposes, he formed a large collection of coins and medals, part of which was given up as collateral for a loan,⁷ and the remainder of which was sold on March 19, 1785, at public auction.⁸ The auction "catalogue" was a broadside, the only known copy of which resides with the Library Company of Philadelphia.

The numismatic content of the sale was gathered into two lots: lot 19 reads: "A mahogany Cabinet containing ancient and modern Gold,

6 E. J. Attinelli, *Numisgraphics* (New York: published by the author, 1876), p. 5.

7 Joel J. Orosz, *The Eagle That Is Forgotten* (Wolfeboro, N.H.: Bowers and Merena, 1988), p. 18.

8 Ibid., p. 51.

FOR SALE at PUBLIC VENDUE,

On THURSDAY the 10th Day of March, at the late Dwelling House of

Pierre Eugene du Simitiere, Esq.

In Arch-street, between Third and Fourth-streets, where the State Lottery Office is now kept,

THE AMERICAN MUSÆUM.

The *curious* Collection was, for many Years, the principal Object of Mr. Du Simitiere's Attention, and has been thought worthy of Notice by both American and European Literati. It consists of the following Articles, which will be sold in Lots, viz.

- BOOKS.**
- ALMANACS and Registers.**
- Architecture, viz.**
- Catalogues of Books and Manuscripts.**
- Dictionaries and Grammars, viz.**
- Drawing, viz.**
- Divinity, viz.**
- Geography and Astronomy, viz.**
- Heraldry, viz.**
- History, viz.**
- Mathematics, viz.**
- Miscellany, (a) viz.**
- Phyic and Surgery, viz.**
- Poetry, viz.**
- Voyages and Travels, viz.**
- Books and Papers relat. to America, viz.**
- Occult Philosophy, viz.**
- Natural History, viz.**
- Coins.**
- Curiosities.**
- Indian and African Antiquities, Dref. Is, Weapons, Utensils, &c.**
- Preference in Spirit, in 38 Phials.**
- An elegant Collection of Shells and other Marine Productions.**
- Fossils and Petrifications.**
- A Collection of Woods, Barks, Fruits, &c. from the West-Indies.**
- DRAWINGS & PRINTS.**
- A Port Folio containing about 170 Drawings.**
- Ditto containing about 240 Prints.**
- Ditto containing about 350 do.**
- Ditto containing about 140 do.**
- Ditto containing about 110 do.**
- Ditto containing about 70 Prints, and 4 Hortæ Succulæ.**
- Ditto containing about 90 Maps and Plans.**
- HORTICICCI.**
- A Port Folio containing about 170 Hortæ Succulæ.**
- Ditto containing about 110 do.**
- AMERICAN MONEY.**
- A Collection of Indian Tokens, &c.**
- A Collection of Paper Money.**

MATTHEW CLARKSON, }
EBENEZER HAZARD, } Administrators.

Philadelphia, printed by CHARLES CIST, at the Corner of Fourth and Arch-streets.

Figure 2.

Silver and Copper Coins and Medals, among which are some very curious Bronzes.”⁹ Lot 36 was described as “A collection of Parchment and Paper Money.”¹⁰ These brief words do little to satisfy one’s curiosity but Du Simitière, an inveterate list maker, provided copious details in unpublished manuscripts.¹¹

Attinelli can hardly be blamed for the omission. Only a trained scholar would have had the discipline to extend the search to 40 years earlier, besides which no copies of the broadside had surfaced amongst the contemporary collecting fraternity. Thus, Part I of *Numisgraphics* misses the beginning of the series plus a few items in the middle, but it does contain 95% of what it set out to gather.

An accurate listing is but one aspect of the book. More memorable is the ambiance that the author creates. Biographies of the collectors and the dealers—some in detail and some less so—serve to introduce the *dramatis personae*. Readers cannot help but feel kinship with their predecessors; perhaps unknowingly, Attinelli creates a bond with any who suspend disbelief. He then enchants totally the bibliophile who thrives on large-paper editions, special papers employed, the numbers printed, and like trivia. Read one chapter of *Numisgraphics* in a quiet moment and the bug will probably bite.

Part II of Attinelli consists of “Catalogues and Price Lists, Issued by Institutions, Dealers, or Private Individuals”. Part III is “Publications Issued in the United States”. Both parts contain items with significant numismatic content which are hunted by the cognoscenti but less avidly than those in Part I; hence no one has drawn up a list of omissions, nor sought to winnow the wheat from the chaff. There are a few comments by the author, such as those found earlier in the book, but, in general, Parts II and III are Flesh and not Spirit.

THE SPIRIT

It is the middle of the nineteenth century. Growing numbers of people in the United States are collecting coins—not just Greek and Roman but coins of their native country. And it is not just the number that is growing, but also their infectious enthusiasm wrapped in a feeling of discovery. It is in this atmosphere that the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia (1857) and the American Numismatic Society

⁹ Ibid., p. 51.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 51.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 19ff.

(1858) were formed. In the latter year, John H. Hickcox published *An Historical Account of American Coinage*.

The following year Montroville Dickeson published the *American Numismatic Manual*, the first comprehensive reference on the coinage of our country, to be followed in 1875 by *Early Coins of America*, the landmark opus of S. S. Crosby. Numismatic history was being created, of which many at that time were well aware.

Quite understandably, collectors were quick to embrace colonial coinage, American medals, and those beguiling large cents, along with other products of the United States Mint. Less intuitive, especially given the modern tendency to buy the coin before the book, was the near mania that developed for early auction catalogues. Attinelli freely acknowledges the help received from such notable contemporaries as “McCoy, Jeremiah Colburn, Major C. P. Nichols, Chas. Chaplin, S. H. Chadbourne and J. N. T. Levick”, Daniel Parish, Jr., and William Poillon.¹² This list omits Richard Lawrence and Isaac Wood as well as those two indefatigable catalogue collectors, Ferguson Haines and William E. Woodward.

From the sampling above, one can conclude that a far, far larger proportion of United States numismatists collected catalogues then than now. In large part this was due to the fact that many catalogues then were priced and such prices were the only available guide to the market. Contrast that to the situation today where we have the Grey Sheets, the Red Book, auction archives, and countless other sources of pricing information. However, large premiums were also paid for the catalogues issued before 1858. Invariably rare, these could provide a rough guide to what others were collecting but they did not provide useful content by modern standards. Rather, the earliest catalogues were treasured simply for what they were: tangible symbols of our roots.

In addition to wanting to own remembrances from the earliest time of our hobby, collectors also strove for completeness. Woodward regularly published offerings of all of his auctions wherein the relative rarities, Sale A and the two Providence sales, fetched far more than the Semi-Annual Sales with their copious content.¹³ Woodward motivated collectors to fill the gaps by making it possible to do so.

Of the large coterie of catalogue enthusiasts, Emmanuel J. Attinelli, William Poillon, Ferguson Haines, Daniel Parish, Jr., and William E.

¹² Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, Preface.

¹³ See Woodward catalogues of April 19, 1886, and October 13, 1884, amongst many.

Woodward were the central figures. Attinelli was the Boswell of the group and, to use a modern term, the blogger. He tracked down possible remnants from the early auctioneers, he networked between the collectors of the day, he wrote his book, and he was almost certainly the sponsor of those instances, noted frequently in *Numisgraphics*, wherein there were “5 printed on note paper and 20 on plain paper”.¹⁴

With regard to this latter supposition, very few of these special editions survived, from which we infer a thoroughly whimsical person behind them, an adjective that does not fit any of the four other individuals we have deemed to be “central”. If Woodward had been responsible, examples would have been offered in his price lists. If Poillon or Haines had been the sponsor, copies would have appeared in the sales of their respective libraries and none did.¹⁵ Finally, if Parish had taken on the project, copies of Cogan sales 2 and 3 would have been in his *AJN* listing and they were not.

No, the person who created the special editions was someone who would do a similarly spotty job of distributing a book he wrote; someone that did not join a numismatic organization until his collecting days were over;¹⁶ and someone who did not decide to go to medical school until in his fifties. For a person who made a vital, lasting contribution to numismatic bibliography, Attinelli was eccentric to say the least. For those who require proof that is less circumstantial, we offer his own words: “a few copies were privately printed, 5 on plain paper, and 25 on note paper, of which there have been destroyed 18 copies of the latter.”¹⁷ Who but the perpetrator could have counted? For clinching proof, catalogues of Cogan sales 2, 3, and 4 note on the cover page: “25 copies printed for E. J. Attinell”.

Of William Poillon, Attinelli had this to say: “To none, however, is more acknowledgment due than to William Poillon, Jr., whose collection is unrivalled in the thoroughness with which it is priced and named, and in point of numbers, has but one superior.”¹⁸ Born into a wealthy New

¹⁴ Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, p. 15.

¹⁵ For Poillon library, see Frossard sale of December 15, 1883; for Haines library, see Frossard sale of December 19, 1894.

¹⁶ ANS records show Attinelli as being proposed as a life member on May 1, 1885, and elected on May 19, 1885.

¹⁷ Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, p. 12.

¹⁸ Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, Preface. The “one superior” may have been the library of Richard Hoe Lawrence, who in 1887 owned the finest collection of early catalogues. However, Lawrence was only 18 years old in 1876. See discussion on page 60..

Netherlands family, Poillon was the well-connected (and well-financed) numismatist that Attinelli was not. Sociable by heritage, Poillon was an active member of the St. Nicholas Society (Dutch), the Huguenot Society, and the Freemasons to name just three. He joined the American Numismatic Society in 1869 at the age of 25 and was to remain active in that organization, holding every office save President and Treasurer, until his death in 1918. The sale of Poillon's library¹⁹ contained a fairly ordinary selection of auction catalogues, with much of his (presumably better) material ending up at the ANS.²⁰ The sale did contain a large-paper copy of Attinelli, confirming Poillon's membership in the inner circle of bibliophiles of the time.

A native of Maine, Ferguson Haines was active in state and local politics for much of his life.²¹ He was equally active in the field of Americana, both collecting and dealing. He resold his acquisitions through most of the dealers of the day, so that when one speaks of "The Haines Sale", one must specify which one. The most important from the bibliophile's standpoint is Frossard's auction of December 19, 1894, which contained a truly sumptuous consignment of auction catalogues, featuring no less than 44 sales dated before 1858, perhaps the best collection ever in this respect. Like Poillon, Haines also contributed to the ANS Library²² but, unlike Poillon, he retained the best material for himself.

Daniel Parish, Jr., joined the American Numismatic Society on 1865 at the tender age of twenty-three and was made Corresponding Secretary in that same year. He would continue serving the Society in one office or another for half a century. As the composer of the first serious list of U.S. auction catalogues,²³ he established his credentials in the field early on. Some think him to be the one referenced by Attinelli as "a prominent collector in this city who desires to remain unknown, but whose collection of American coin catalogues is the largest in this country."²⁴ Another candidate is Richard Hoe Lawrence, who owned the copy of the 1828 Watkins broadside from which Attinelli would make his photolithographic copies. Parish purchased much if not all of

19 E. Frossard sale, December 12, 1883.

20 ANS archives.

21 NumismaticMall, biography of Haines.

22 Ibid.

23 D. Parish, "List of Catalogues of Coin Sales", *American Journal of Numismatics* 1 (1866): 29-30, 35-36, 43-44.

24 Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, Preface.

Lawrence's catalogue holdings, gifting great rarities, including the Watkins broadside, to the ANS in 1887.²⁵ Given that Lawrence was only 18 years old in 1876, it seems probable that much of his truly notable collection was purchased from a senior numismatist after 1876 and before 1887. Possibilities for the seller would include Charles I. Bushnell and Professor Charles E. Anthon. Having defined the mystery and left a few clues, we will leave it to others to solve.

Full credit must be given to Daniel Parish, Jr., for donating the Lawrence material to the ANS, along with large chunks of his own collection. Clearly he intended to set up an enduring reference collection for this material that he loved so intensely. He succeeded entirely so that today the ANS Library is the most complete assembly of Attinelli items extant and, happily, also the most accessible.

If Attinelli was the blogger for *The Spirit*, then William E. Woodward was its source of energy. In addition to cataloguing tens of thousands of auction lots himself, he was the market maker for these specialty items: "About 16 years ago I commenced purchasing from dealers and others their remainders of catalogues, and continued to do so until the attainable stock was exhausted; many of these, where the number was large, went to the paper mill, but what I deemed a suitable number were reserved for sale."²⁶ And sell them he did, in virtually every sale from 1864 onward.

The regularity of Woodward's offerings allows one to track the hobby. Using the prices paid one can determine the desiderata of early collectors, which included all sales before 1858, large-paper editions of Cogan and Woodward catalogues, all priced catalogues, and selected rarities such as the Hubbard and Wall sales of 1863. Indeed, the Woodward price lists comprise a definitive 25-year database that encompasses both the birth and the death of *The Spirit*. If the publication of *Numisgraphics* in 1876 marks a high-water mark, then a convenient end point can be taken from the Hiram Deats sale in 1892 wherein six lots totaling 600 catalogues fetched a grand total of 60 cents!²⁷ This was not an obscure auction but rather the library sale of an important collector, thus emphasizing the lack of interest in catalogues, even amongst numismatic bibliophiles. From 1886 onward, many similar instances of catalogues selling for penny prices can be cited.

²⁵ Lawrence fully annotated his copy of *Numisgraphics*, now in the library of the ANS, thus establishing his ownership of the Watkins broadside.

²⁶ W. E. Woodward catalogue, June 22–23, 1881, p. 35.

²⁷ E. Frossard sale, June 9–10, 1892, p. 49.

When Woodward ceased writing auction catalogues in 1890, for years there was no one to pick up the baton or perhaps there was no parade to lead. Whichever, the first quarter of the twentieth century saw some of the finest numismatic libraries go under the hammer: Thomas Elder sold the books of William Sumner Appleton (May 10, 1913), Lyman Low (May 1, 1924), Samuel Hudson Chapman (April 1, 1932) and Edgar Adams (June 27, 1932); Lyman Low handled the libraries of Benjamin Betts (January 11, 1908) and John W. Scott (October 24, 1917). The books in these outstanding libraries brought respectable sums but the auction catalogues—such as there were, and there were few—brought low prices. Be it said that both Low and Chapman possessed copies of *Numisgraphics* (the latter large-paper, no less), so it wasn't as if they were unfamiliar with the topic; they simply never got bitten with the bug. *The Spirit*, if not dead, had gone into deep slumber.

In retrospect, the revival of *The Spirit* had an inauspicious beginning. In June 1950, the hierarchy of the ANA saw fit to expel Frank Katzen, a feisty young dealer and auctioneer, from its membership rolls. Normally, this would have been sufficient to end the man's numismatic career, but after a few years of trafficking in foreign material, Katzen had the inspired idea of switching to numismatic literature. He issued his first catalogue devoted exclusively to this topic in 1958 and the rest, as they say, is history.²⁸

Later cataloguers would come to know more about numismatic literature than did Katzen but, like Woodward, he would list individually lots of low value rather than combine them into bulk lots. Thus collectors could "fill in" holdings of a given periodical or seek to complete runs of auction catalogues, all thanks to Katzen's patience. It was supremely fitting that the "Wylie Hoard", almost certainly Woodward's long-lost inventory of auction catalogues, should find its way to Katzen, to be dispersed to eager bibliophiles, primarily in two sales in 1977.²⁹

If Katzen was the Woodward in a renaissance of *The Spirit*, then George Fuld filled the role of Attinelli. Starting in 1960,³⁰ Fuld became an indefatigable searcher for all manner of numismatic literature in general, and auction catalogues in particular. His library, which was sold by Katzen in two auctions in 1971,³¹ featured extensive runs of Chapman,

²⁸ Katzen sale 29, mail-bid catalogue dated June 21, 1958.

²⁹ Katzen sales of March 19, 1977, and April 29–30, 1977.

³⁰ Conversation with George Fuld, February 27, 2013, regarding his collection and sources thereof.

³¹ Katzen sales of August 15, 1971, and November 27–28, 1971.

Woodward, Cogan, and many many others. Unlike John J. Ford, Jr., who was collecting at the same time but who sought important information only, Fuld wanted the lean catalogues as well as the rich ones. Appropriately, lot 2 of his first sale was a copy of *Numisgraphics*.

Fuld had to overcome the lack of numismatic book dealers to assist him—only Aaron Feldman and C. J. Edgar were active in the early 1960s when Fuld began his quest. He was further challenged by the lack of any guide to the corpus of collectible catalogues, although this limitation was ameliorated when the American Numismatic Society published the holdings of its library in 1962.³² George Fuld must be credited with blazing a trail that others would soon follow.

John W. Adams, an active buyer at the Fuld sale, was perhaps the next down the trail, followed by Harry Bass, Armand Champa, Dan Hamelberg, and a host of others. Adams would go on to author *United States Numismatic Literature, Volumes I and II*, which would provide a full listing of the important cataloguers; he assembled and then in 2006 sold his collection of Attinelliana,³³ the largest ever offered. Like William Poillon before him, Harry Bass, Jr., made many gifts to the library of the American Numismatic Society before offering the bulk of his collection at public auction.³⁴ Dan Hamelberg, who may well have the most extensive collection of all, is still adding to his library.

Armand Champa sold his extensive collection of auction catalogues at a series of sales conducted by Bowers and Merena and catalogued by Charlie Davis.³⁵ He deserves special mention as proof positive that *The Spirit* was reborn: Champa owned no less than four (!) copies of *Numisgraphics*, one of which had been owned previously by Ferguson Haines. No doubt it was *The Spirit* that drove him to take two copies of the 1976 Quarterman reprint of *Numisgraphics* and annotate them with the holdings of 1) Ferguson Haines (taken from Haines's copy), 2) William Poillon (likewise from Haines's copy), 3) William E. Woodward (from the sale of his library in the McCoy sale³⁶), and 4) Armand Champa. No one, not even Attinelli, has exhibited as much passion for the subject.

³² *Dictionary Catalogue of the Library of the American Numismatic Society*, 7 vols. (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1962).

³³ Kolbe sale 100, June 3, 2006.

³⁴ Kolbe sales 75 (December 12, 1998), 77 (May 6, 1999), 78 (September 25, 1999), and 80 (June 10, 2000).

³⁵ Bowers and Merena sales of November 17, 1994; March 23, 1995; September 10, 1995; and November 28, 1995.

³⁶ W.E. Woodward catalogue, May 17–21, 1864.

In the age of digital media, one can question the relevance of brittle old pieces of paper. Early auction catalogues do contain occasional nuggets of information, but these alone do not guarantee the survival of interest in the subject. The Spirit died *circa* 1890 and it could die again.

There will always be those seeking to complete runs of the major cataloguers like Cogan, Woodward, and the Chapmans. For ardent collectors, filling that last hole in the penny board will remain an irresistible challenge. However, for all the listings in *Numisgraphics* that are not part of a logical grouping—and that is most of them—the rationale for survival is not clear. Hopefully there will always be an Armand Champa or a Harry Bass who will collect them because they are there. What is needed, we submit, is the development of an interest in trivia, not unlike the endless mining of small nuggets done by those laboring in the fields of large cents and colonial coinage. Why does an 1848 auction catalogue give the person holding it a thrill? Who was “a prominent collector in this city who desires to remain unknown, but whose collection of coin catalogues is the largest in the country”?³⁷ Did J. N. T. Levick deserve to be dinged for “the not to be admired practice of ‘muling’”?³⁸ Was A. H. Satterlee whose “social disposition, it is deeply to be regretted, led him to an early grave” a drunk or worse?³⁹ And what happened to all those special editions? Attinelli’s opus is strewn with such mysteries that cry out to be solved.

One important difference between now and a century ago is the founding of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society in 1980. Major credit for the creation of this organization goes to George Kolbe, the first president of the Society, and Jack Collins, the first editor of *The Asylum*, the club’s periodical. Further credit goes to Dr. Joel J. Orosz, who has been the unofficial oracle of the group from the earliest days until now. These special three have been joined by a membership that now exceeds 350. With luck, some number of these lovers of the printed word will buy a copy of the Quarterman reprint of Attinelli, allow themselves to fall prey to the willing suspension of disbelief, and then become immersed hopelessly in the trivia of bygone days. The Spirit is yours for the taking.

APPENDIX A: SPECIAL EDITIONS

Cogan, Woodward, and Strobridge put out their own special editions—

³⁷ Attinelli, *Numisgraphics*, Preface.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 16.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 26.

large format, special paper, printed prices, and the like. Attinelli noted these special editions in his text, commenting on quantities and prices. On his own, he printed a total of 30 “special editions”, typically in quantities of 25 but occasionally twenty. Of the 30 special editions undertaken, no less than 26 were single-page copies of addenda, selected for reasons known only to him. Typically, the body of the auction to which the addendum was added is nondescript, with minimal content. In his own sale of January 8, 1878, Attinelli offered a “complete set” of the addenda, which he counted as forty-two.⁴⁰ This lot sold for the fancy sum of \$1.20, notwithstanding that the cataloguer noted two additional sets would be available at \$10 each and that “only seven” existed. There is no record of other sets being offered earlier than 1878 or later, so it must be assumed that Attinelli sold very few, perhaps because the price of \$10 was a good deal higher than the perceived value. It is pertinent to note that, in 1878, one could buy all 384 pages of Crosby’s *The Early Coins of America* for 12 dollars.⁴¹

Another unsuccessful venture into publishing involved large-paper copies of *Numisgraphics*. Under lot 926 of the 1878 sale, Attinelli states, “10 copies of the above were printed (at \$10 per copy) on fine large paper—either of the four copies remaining unsold can be had by addressing the author.” As mentioned above, the libraries of S. H. Chapman and Lyman Low each contained a large-paper edition but, strangely, none have surfaced in modern times. If one were to cross the auction block, it would be the focus of intense competition.

Thanks to the generosity of Parish and Poillon, the American Numismatic Society has a nearly complete file of the addenda, but few now remain in private hands. Champa listed only four in his annotated reprint of *Numisgraphics*; Adams had only six.⁴² Dan Hamelberg, who has shown the most diligence on this score, has accumulated twenty. Thus, the floating supply is miniscule and the challenge of collecting them is, from a practical standpoint, moot.

Of the four catalogues that Attinelli reproduced in special editions of 25 copies, three were Cogan sales 2, 3, and 4. By definition, there once existed 75 copies of these three in total, yet today only eight can be located:

40 E. J. Attinelli sale, January 8, 1878, lot 925. There is a material difference between our count of 30 and the creator’s count of 42 which, try as we may, we cannot bridge.

41 Joel J. Orosz, “Perseverance Prevails”, *Coin World*, April 22, 2013, p. 64.

42 Annotated in Adams’s copy of the reprint of *Numisgraphics*.

- The ANS has copies of all three sales—one copy of 2, two copies of 3, of which one was donated by Daniel Parish, Jr., and two copies of 4, with, once again, one having been donated by Parish.⁴³
- The sale of a portion of the John W. Adams library contained copies of 3 and 4, both obtained from Ted Craige, earlier the property of C. R. Palmer; this sale also contained the manuscript for 2 and 4.⁴⁴
- Copy of 4 in a bound volume of catalogues from the Stack's library.⁴⁵

Undoubtedly, there are other copies somewhere, but even two times eight survivors out of 75 printed is not a very good “batting average”. The low survival of these catalogues can only be due to a typically unsuccessful effort at distribution by their sponsor which, in turn, might have been a function of the high price: at \$2 per copy or \$6 for the set of three, the purchaser was receiving only minimal content. In offering a copy of Sale 4 in 1864 (when the ink might not yet have been dry), Woodward notes that it is “excessively rare”.⁴⁶ This should have prompted Attinelli to step forward with un-distributed catalogues, but if he did, the market simply did not share his appreciation of their value. When described as “excessively rare”, Cogan sale 3 sold for \$1.25, a big discount from the \$2.00 offering price, but a short time later it would sell for a mere 25 cents *priced and named*.⁴⁷

Unlike Woodward, Edward Cogan did not publish a record of the catalogues he had authored. Thus, when Daniel Parish, Jr., made the first published listing of auction catalogues in 1866,⁴⁸ he included Cogan's 1 and 4, but not his 2 and 3. The fact that Parish, a known maven, was unaware of 2 and 3 may define the challenge that Attinelli was facing. He could do all the re-printing he pleased, but if collectors did not know what holes needed filling, demand for his creations was bound to be torpid.

In his special editions, Attinelli's enthusiasm for auction catalogues shines through. He had fallen in love with the genre and did all in his power to promote it. His success in spreading the gospel may have been modest but, today, his example draws our admiration while challenging us to enter the special world that was the object of his affections.

⁴³ E-mail from Elizabeth Hahn, April 8, 2013.

⁴⁴ Kolbe sale of June 1, 1990, lots 207 and 208. Interestingly, Palmer's copy of *Numisgraphics*, now in the ANS Library, confirms that he owned copies of all three sales.

⁴⁵ Kolbe & Fanning sale of the Stack's library, January 9, 2010, part of lot 44.

⁴⁶ Woodward sale of May 17, 1864, lot 2807.

⁴⁷ C. W. Idell sale, January 8–9, 1878, lot 924.

⁴⁸ Parish, “List of Catalogues”.

APPENDIX B: NOT IN ATTINELLI

Date	Auction: Owner and contents, where known	Source of information
3/19/1785 1820	Pierre Eugène du Simitière Manuscript of the Bache Coll'n, later sold in New York	Joel J. Orosz Woodward 96, lot 1836
2/13/1823	William D. Peck, Cambridge. Books and coins	Woodward 69, lot 3303
2/26/1823-?	J. D. Cogswell. Rare coins, medals, etc.	Woodward 69, lot 3304
1826 ?	Baker & Alexander, Boston	Woodward 69, lot 3305
7/11/1842	Harrington's Museun by N. A. Thompson & Co	Woodward 69, lot 3306
1/4/1847	Berrell & Burr for Isaiah Lak- ens, deceased	Library Co. of Phil.
10/28/1852	Lyman & Co., NY	McCoy sale, lot 2786
10/17/1853	Bangs Bro. & Co. Coins and medals, 204 lots	R. H. Lawrence**
5/17/1855	Leavitt, Delisser & Co., NY	Parish no. 12*
12/5 & 9/1855	Bangs Bro. & Co., for H. A. Brady	Parish no. 16*
1/20/1859	Bangs, Merwin & Co. NY	Champa
1/29/1859	Bangs, Nerwin & Co., NY	Parish no. 25
3/15/1859	Bangs, Merwin & Co. 1202 lots, only a few numismatic	Kolbe 83, lot 569
7/16/1859	Bangs, Merwin & Co., NY	Parish nos. 38, 39*
3/26-27/1860	Bangs, Merwin & Co., NY for W. L. Bramhall	Parish no. 50*
4/4/1862	M. Thomas & Sons. Broadside. Medals, U.S., etc	Adams
10/31/63	H. H. Leeds	Champa
10/7/1864	Stedman & Co. Western Sani- tary Comm. 2 numis. lots	Bass II
5/29/1865	S. G. Hubbard, Cincinnati. Coins and medals, 205 lots	R. H. Lawrence**
10/13/1865	Chas De F. Burns, Continental paper, 279 lots	Champa, Adams
12/20/1865	Conant & Sherburne broadside	Champa, Adams
12/24/1866	Bangs, Merwin & Co., 367 lots	Champa
3/5/1867	D. Scott, 24 mo	Champa, Katen 81

6/11/69	D. H. Brown. Thomas & Sons.	Champa, Adams
	176 lots	
1/25/1871	Thos. Birch & Son. Broadside.	Champa, Adams
	280 lots	
2/23/1871	Thos. Birch & Son. Broadside.	Katen 57, lot 351
	182 lots	
4/12/1871	Thomas & Co. Broadside. 282	Davis 7/04, lot 2
	lots	
5/4/1871	Thomas & Co. Broadside. 288	Kolbe 69, lot 2387
	lots.	
1/31/1872	Bangs, Merwin for James B.	Champa, Adams
	Longacre	
2/14/1872	Thomas & Co. Broadside. 357	Champa, Adams
	lots	
6/10/1874	Charles Sumner. Personal	Woodward 28, lot 552
	property	
7/18/1874	J. C. Hills. 18 pp. Medals and	Champa
	coins.	

* Daniel Parish, Jr., published a list of auction catalogues in the *American Journal of Numismatics*, vol. 1 (1866). It is surprising that Attinelli omits five catalogues on this list given that, on page 17 of *Numisgraphics*, he acknowledges familiarity with the *AJN* article.

** Richard Hoe Lawrence's copy of *Numisgraphics*, ANS Library. Lawrence interleaved his copy, placing notes on the blank pages. The entries cited are coincident with the corresponding dates in Attinelli's work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

George Kolbe provided the author with an abundance of information as well as truly inspiring encouragement. Charlie Davis, who is so badly bitten by Attinelli that he reprinted Cogan sales 2, 3, and 4, served as both oracle and example. There is no way that the American Numismatic Society can *not* be part of a study involving auction catalogues: Librarian Elizabeth Hahn rolled out some of the Society's treasures for my examination and Archivist David Hill supplied official history. David Yoon provided useful comments on Richard Hoe Lawrence. Daniel Hamelberg, whose numismatic library has no equal, provided numerous additions to Appendix B, joining in an analysis of the various issues as an enthusiastic partner. Finally, Dr. John N. Lupia III provided a treasure trove of biographical information along with a most useful critique of the manuscript.

Which Came First: Childs' *Views* or *The Casket*?

Pete Smith and Joel J. Orosz

For *The Asylum*, vol. 28, no. 2, Joel J. Orosz wrote "The Second United States Mint and *The Casket*." In that article Orosz stated that the first illustration of the Second United States Mint appeared in the October 1831 issue of *The Casket*. This was during construction before the building was completed, so the illustration must have been derived from an architect's rendering. However, there is another contender for the title of first published illustration.

The Second Mint also appeared in *Views in Philadelphia and Its Environs from Original Drawings Taken in 1827-30*. The engraver and publisher was Cephas Grier Childs at 80 Walnut Street in Philadelphia. The challenge is to determine the date of publication.

Cephas G. Childs was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, on September 8, 1793, shortly after the First Mint commenced coinage. He learned printing as an apprentice to the bank-note engraving firm of Murray, Draper, Fairman & Co. During the War of 1812, he served with the Washington Guards.

Childs published *Views of Philadelphia* with twenty-four plates in four parts between 1827 and 1830. The *National Gazette* proclaimed, "We have seen no publication of the kind more deserving of the patronage of Pennsylvania, or more likely to succeed in other parts of the Union, particularly the chief cities."

In 1831 he set out for Europe to learn more about lithography, but he sustained injuries that ultimately shortened his career. By 1834 he was out of the printmaking business. Later he published *The Commercial List and Price Current* until his retirement in 1852. Childs died on July 7, 1871.

Various sources may help establish a more precise date of publication for his depiction of the Second Mint. A copyright of 1827 was confirmed

in a statement from D. Caldwell, clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the tenth day of December, in the fifty-second year of the independence of the United States of America, A. D. 1827, Cephas G. Childs, of the said district, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the following, to wit: Views in Philadelphia, and its Vicinity: Engraved from Original Drawings.

However, the book was not published in 1827. The book includes a copy of a resolution passed on September 23, 1830, by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. This resolution commends Childs for his publication and preservation of the images.

Later the book acknowledges contributions to the publication. This page is dated November 1830.

The text describing the Mint building makes reference to the amount of coinage prior to the end of 1830. This suggests that this description could not have been written prior to the beginning of 1831.

There is a window then, from the beginning of 1831 until October 1831 when *The Casket* was published. Was Childs' *Views* published first during this window?

Both publications included engraved illustrations of public institutions and facilities. Perhaps the use of the same illustrations will identify which came first.

Contents of Childs' *Views*

Title	Pictures by	Engraved by	Date
1. Philadelphia from Kensington	T. Birch, P.A.	J. Cone	1828
2. Swedish Lutheran Church	T. Sully, P.A.	C.G. Childs	1828
3. Christ Church	G. Strickland	C.G. Childs	1829
4. Friends' Meeting-house at Merion	H. Reinagle	J. W. Steel	1830
5. St. Stephen's Church	G. Strickland	C.G. Childs	1829
6. First Congregational Unitarian Church	H. Reinagle	C.G. Childs	1829
7. State House	G. Strickland	C.G. Childs	1828

8. Fairmount Water Works from the West	T. Doughty, P.A.	J. Cone	1829
9. Fairmount Water Works from the Reservoir	T. Doughty, P.A.	W.E. Tucker	1829
10. On the Schuylkill from the Old Water Works	Capt. Watson	C.G. Childs	1827
11. Bank of the United States	G. Strickland	C.G. Childs	1828
12. Bank of Pennsylvania	G. Strickland	W.E. Tucker	1827
13. Girard's Bank	G. Strickland	C.G. Childs	1829
14. Pennsylvania Hospital	G. Strickland	C.G. Childs	1828
15. Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb	G. Strickland	G. Fairman	1827
16. University of Pennsylvania	G. Strickland	J.W. Steel	1828
17. Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts	G. Strickland	C.G. Childs	1828
18. Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania	W. Mason	C.G. Childs	1829
19. Plan of the Eastern Peniten- tiary	J. Haviland, P.A.	C.G. Childs	
20. United States Mint	W. Strickland, P.A.	W.H. Hay	1830
21. Widows' and Orphans' Asylum	G. Strickland	J.W. Steel	1827
22. Schuylkill Canal at Mana- yunk	G. Lehman	C.G. Childs	1829
23. Eaglesfield	W. Mason	C.G. Childs	1830
24. Sedgley Park	E.W. Clay	Steel/Hay/ Childs	1828
25. Academy of Natural Sci- ences	G. Strickland	C.G. Childs	1830

Contents of *The Casket* for 1831

January	United States Branch Bank, N.Y.; New York Exchange
February	St. Augustine's Church, Phila.; Second Unitarian Church, N. Y.
March	United States Arsenal, Pennsylvania
April	Bank of England; the Vatican and St. Peter's Church, Rome
May	Church of St. Mark; The Fountains of St. Peter

June	King's Palace, England; Piazza di San Marco, Venice
July	(no buildings)
August	Ragland Castle, England; Westminster Abbey, London
September	President's House; King's Pavilion, England
October	Mint of the United States; Academy of Natural Science
November	Cumberland Terrace; Lambeth Palace
December	State House, Philadelphia; Westminster Hall, London

The only facilities included in both publications were the United States Mint and the Academy of Natural Sciences, appearing in the October 1831 issue of *The Casket*. Let us first look at the Academy of Natural Sciences.

The two engravings have the same perspective and show pedestrians in the same positions. The illustration in *Childs' Views* is a much more finely executed engraving. The illustration in *The Casket* appears to be a crude copy of the illustration in *Childs' Views*.

The texts of the two articles are not identical but very similar. They are so similar that it is obvious that one was copied from the other. Again, this suggests that *Childs' Views* came first and the illustration in *The Casket* was copied from that source.

The view of the Second Mint in *Childs' Views* shows more of the building. Again, *Childs' Views* engraving is more finely executed. While it would be possible to copy this in a smaller format for *The Casket*, it would not be possible to copy the larger view from the smaller.

The text describing the United States Mint is almost identical for the two articles. In general, the text in *Childs' Views* appears to be the original, with the text in *The Casket* including a couple of typographical errors made during transcription.

Copies of the Strickland design, engraved by W. H. Hay, have been offered for sale as individual prints. It currently cannot be determined if these were removed from *Childs' Views* or were originally from a different source. These are dated 1830.

There is another possibility that should be considered. While preparing plans for the Second Mint, William Strickland probably produced a larger rendering of the finished building. From this then, both the print



Illustration from Childs, *Views of Philadelphia*

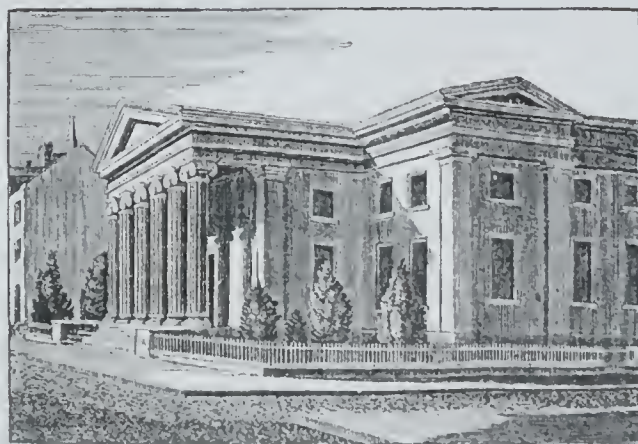


Illustration from *The Casket*

for Childs' *Views* and the engraving for *The Casket* may have been copied from the larger original by Strickland.

The dimensions of the building under construction would also have to have come, directly or indirectly, from Strickland. Thus the text for both publications could have been copied from some other, currently unidentified source.

It seems clear, therefore, that the illustration appearing in *The Casket* in October of 1831 was copied from an earlier publication, either Childs' *Views*, published most likely during the first half of 1831, or from a larger rendering of the Second Mint published in an as-yet unidentified source. In either case, however, it seems safe to say that the illustration of the Second Mint published in *The Casket* did not represent the general public's first glimpse of the Second Mint

Reminiscences of a Numismatic Bookseller 2

George Kolbe

A man of many talents, Charles M. Johnson (January 8, 1908–February 3, 1979), was born and raised in Butte, Montana, and received a law degree from the University of Montana. Johnson relocated to Long Beach, California, where he became a long-time resident and worked in the legal department of an oil firm located there. Following retirement he entered the building construction business. In 1961 he was elected an ANA governor and served four consecutive terms. In 1963, after having supervised the highly successful publication of the 1959–1960 four-volume series of *Selections from the Numismatist*, Johnson was appointed chairman of a committee to develop plans for constructing a headquarters building for the American Numismatic Association. Three and a half years later, ground was broken for the Colorado Springs headquarters structure. In his obituary, appearing in the April 1979 issue of *The Numismatist*, Glenn Smedley termed Johnson “Mr. ANA Headquarters” and observed of his devotion to the American Numismatic Association that “There are many whose names are better known (Charlie was modest and quiet). But I’d be hard put to name any member of the last half century who contributed as much toward the Association’s advancement.”

In the late 1960s, I belonged to a number of Southern California coin clubs and, by the late 1970s, began manning bourse tables at major coin shows in Los Angeles. Charles Johnson and I probably met a number of times during this period but I do not recall exactly when or where. In early 1979 I was invited to visit his home to discuss the sale of his numismatic library. On a cool but sunny day I traveled from nearby Mission Viejo to an older residential area in Long Beach. I was greeted at the door, came inside to meet Mrs. Johnson, then we walked to the back yard where a structure had been added abutting the garage. The library! The ambience was modest; the aroma of old books intoxicating.

Johnson's numismatic library was unusual in more than one respect. While it covered the numismatic spectrum, it was limited to numismatic works written in English. Charles was a practical man. Classic American numismatic books and periodicals were fairly comprehensive, yet his holdings of earlier key American auction sale catalogues were sketchy. Having said that, it was a wonderful library, generally in nice condition. Virtually all volumes featured the Johnson bookplate, invariably accompanied by his name and address ink stamp on the endsheets and elsewhere, including the gutter margin of page 50 or page 100, depending on the length of the relevant volume. It was but a slight detraction, then and now, esthetics having been substantially counterbalanced by provenance.

After several hours viewing the library and jotting down values, I made an offer to purchase the library and it was promptly accepted. We agreed to finalize the details in a few days and I was soon back on the freeway to Mission Viejo, with visions of rare numismatic books dancing in my head. After a few days I had not heard from Charles and I gave him a call. It was then that I learned from Mrs. Johnson that he had died later in the day that we met. I believe that she and I discussed the library that day, but I decided that it would be appropriate to wait for the family to contact me.

Time went by and I received a call from Douglas Saville of Spink Ltd. to say that he was traveling from London to Long Beach to view the Johnson library. Bad news—but not all bad, as it turned out. One of Johnson's sons had attended my first public auction, held on June 9 and 10, 1979, at the Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles. Douglas Saville had also attended the sale and had purchased a number of works on ancient and foreign numismatics. Johnson *filis* approached Saville following the sale, and late in the year, Douglas arrived in Long Beach. After considerable negotiation, he purchased the ancient and foreign component of the library. I was then contacted around December 1979 or early January 1980 about the American part of the library.

Charles Johnson's son in real life was proprietor of a used-car emporium. I was no match for him. While the ancient and foreign portion of the library was impressive, from my viewpoint something over half of the overall value was still present. Yet I ended up paying an amount equal to what I had agreed to earlier for the entire library! A few days later I drove a truck to Long Beach and produced several hundred \$100 bills

in exchange for the library. I had managed to come up with part of the amount but my brother had graciously agreed to lend me the remainder.

Gulp! I had paid far more for Charles M. Johnson's American numismatic library than was warranted by prevailing prices. But there was a new spirit in the air! Serious numismatists from all over the country were clamoring for classic numismatic works. Prices were marked up substantially, yet the books flew out the door. Within a month I had repaid my brother. It was the start of a new market, one that culminated in the June 1981 Lee-Champa-Essex Institute auction, which set new records for desirable numismatic works across the board. Years later, the topic of the loan came up with my brother and I mentioned that I had added ten \$100 bills to the 250 that I had returned to him in a plain envelope. He was surprised. He had never opened the envelope before it went back into his safety deposit box.

The Johnson library was the third substantial numismatic library that I had the good fortune to buy during the 1977–1980 period. Perhaps a future article will discuss acquisition of the Floyd Hazelwood and Bill Castenholz libraries in 1977 and 1978. Both were notable, though the Johnson library was the most important library that I ever acquired, in terms of the impact that it had in the acceleration of interest in classic American numismatic works.

A few additional aspects of the purchase may prove of interest. A large cardboard box of miscellaneous Stack's auction sales had been found at the last minute in the Johnson garage and was included in the deal. What a mixed blessing they were! Most of the library had already been unpacked and arranged on shelves in our 1100-square-foot office in Mission Viejo. Then, while lifting the cardboard carton containing the Stack's catalogues, the bottom of the box collapsed and, instantly, thousands of silverfish scurried across the warehouse floor in search of sustenance and darkness. It required several visits over several months by the friendly local pest-control company before they were finally vanquished.

The plan expressed at the time by Johnson's son was to drive later on the day of the transaction to Jonathans in Inglewood, California, the premier purveyor of gold bullion coins at the time, to trade cash for krugerrands. Gold bullion was approaching its zenith and I have wondered, after the gold market crashed and since, if the plan was actually implemented and, if so, what happened to the gold disks involved.

A few days after acquiring the library, a telephone caller inquired about an original edition of A. W. Browning's rare 1925 work on quarter dollars. Yes, we just happened to have one in stock. After taking it off the shelf and looking at it briefly I was able to confirm that, yes, it was complete and in nice condition. Anxious to generate sales, a price was soon agreed to and upon looking at it more closely after the call I discovered that it was a presentation copy, signed by the author and inscribed to B. Max Mehl! I was a bit more careful after that.

Help Promote the Numismatic Bibliomania Society

Howard A. Daniel III sets up a club table to represent the Numismatic Bibliomania Society (and the International Bank Note Society, Numismatics International, Numismatic Literary Guild, and several other organizations) at the MPC Fest, the International Paper Money Show, and the summer FUN Show. Howard will no longer set up at American Numismatic Association events and the January FUN Show.

The Asylum and NBS membership applications are given to numismatists interested in our society from the table. Journals and applications from other societies are also given out.

There are also world bank notes and coins to give to young and new numismatists in a packet which includes a consolidated membership application form for all of the groups. References are also given out, especially to teachers and scout counselors for them to use with their students and scouts.

Howard always needs volunteers to staff the table and needs your unwanted references, journals, world banknotes, and/or world coins. Please contact him at hadaniel3@msn.com to make donation arrangements. The best method is to take them to him at one of the shows or events he attends, otherwise you can mail them to him. Howard will reply with a thank-you letter which will describe the donation for tax purposes.

“You Don’t Say”: Numismatic Quarterly Quiz

Myron Xenos

1. What does the “fugio” on Fugio cents mean?
2. What is the emergency money used in Austria and Germany from 1914 to 1923 called?
3. Which early U.S. minor coin was only .750 silver instead of the normal .900 fine?
4. James Longacre placed his initial on what U.S. coin?
5. Tokens issued by merchants selling goods to the military were called what?
6. The act of which year discontinued the 2-cent piece, silver trime, and half dime?
7. Who designed the Susan B. Anthony dollar?
8. What, in American numismatics, is a watermelon?
9. Who faces left instead of right on modern Federal Reserve notes?
10. The Charter Oak appears on two U.S. coins. Which ones?
11. Who gave the “Cross of Gold” speech in 1896?
12. Which Ohio coin dealer compiled the first “U.S. Trends” for *Coin World*?

Off the Shelf

David F. Fanning

In the last issue, I wrote about the two binding variants of the 1893 Frossard and Hays work on United States large cents. While interesting, the two varieties of that work had been known about for quite some time. However, new discoveries are still occasionally made in the field of numismatic literature.

In December, I was finishing the cataloguing of our February 2013 mail-bid sale when I came across the following catalogue:

Trifet, F., & Co. *Catalogue of a Collection of American and Foreign Coins and Medals*. Boston: Leonard, Bird & Co., Nov. 17, 1869. 8vo, original printed wraps. 16 pages; 727 lots.

This is a somewhat scarce sale, and is the only sale listed by Gengerke¹ for Trifet. Though I hadn't seen a copy of this sale for a few years, I was only somewhat surprised to find a second copy in the same consignment. The surprise came when I picked it up and found that it was noticeably heavier than the first copy.

Something was up. I flipped through each to make sure that they were both complete. They were. I felt the paper: distinctly different. The second copy was printed on far heavier stock. Obviously a thick-paper copy.

A look through our database revealed that my partner, George Kolbe, had offered a special edition Trifet sale in his 63rd sale (Oct. 14, 1995), but that was an interleaved copy. This wasn't interleaved but was clearly heavier. I tossed them on a nearby postal scale and found the regular sale to weigh 0.85 ounces and the thick-paper copy a whopping 1.5 ounces.

Why Trifet would have issued a special edition—much less two of them—of his sole experiment with numismatic auctions remains a

¹ Martin Gengerke, *American Numismatic Auctions*, compiled on November 17, 2009 (PDF file available for downloading at www.coinbooks.org/resources/auctions.pdf), p. 649.

F. TRIFET & CO.'S FIRST COIN SALE.

CATALOGUE OF A COLLECTION

OF

American and Foreign Coins and Medals,

COMPRISING

Silver and Copper United States Coins, Colonials, Washingtons,
Proof Sets, Patterns, American and Foreign Medals,

AND A VALUABLE ASSORTMENT OF

RARE OLD SAXON AND ENGLISH GOLD AND SILVER COINS,

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,

BY LEONARD, BIRD & CO.

No. 146 TREMONT STREET, BOSTON,

On WEDNESDAY, NOV. 17, 1869, at 10 o'clock A.M.

Orders will be executed by the Auctioneers ; by HENRY COOK, 74 Friend Street ;
and by F. TRIFET & Co., Publishers of the American Stamp Mercury and Numis-
matist, 20 State Street, Boston.

Coins on exhibition the day before the Sale.



BOSTON :

PRINTED AT THE HERALD JOB OFFICE, No. 4 WILLIAMS COURT.

1869.

F. TRIFET & CO.'S FIRST COIN SALE.

CATALOGUE OF A COLLECTION
OF

American and Foreign Coins and Medals,

COMPRISING

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Coins on exhibition the day before the Sale.

BOSTON :

PRINTED AT THE HERALD JOB OFFICE, N. 4 WILLIAM STREET.

1869.

Figure 1. The Nov. 17, 1869 Trifet sale: (A, opposite) the regular edition; (B, above) the thick-paper edition.

mystery. What isn't uncertain is that both are quite rare, with the indefatigable Attinelli² missing both of them. Only the regular edition is included in Attinelli's groundbreaking bibliography, where he ascribes the collection to Charles S. Fellows.

Paris native Ferdinand Marie Trifet (1848–1899) was the publisher of the *American Stamp Mercury*, and was an early proponent of stamp collecting in this country. After the Civil War, he became a prominent stamp dealer in Boston. His scarce monthly magazine began life in 1867 purely devoted to stamps, but started to include numismatic content in its second volume (1868–69), upon which it added *and Numismatist* to its title.

Under the headline "Our New Name," the publishers wrote that to inquiries

of why it was not a Numismatic as well as a Timbrophilic paper, we always answered that two magazines on the former subject were enough. That we were mistaken, our Numismatic friends will at once see, for though there are two Magazines published in this country devoted to the collecting of coins, the editor of one [*American Journal of Numismatics*] is so learned, and the articles of the magazine so profound, that it will never be a popular magazine, though it should be read by every collector who takes an interest in his collection. The editor of the other [*Mason's Coin and Stamp Collectors' Magazine*] has the misfortune to lack what his brother has too much of, viz: that much needed, but seldom found, article, common sense. We have often wondered whether the Timbrophilic or the Numismatic articles in its columns were the least correct, but have not been able to solve this problem. Seeing the above state of things, we have determined to establish a Magazine that will be popular, or, in other words, one that can be understood by, and teach something to, everyone that reads it. To do this, we have enlarged the MERCURY, and will hereafter publish indiscriminately the best available articles on stamps and coins.

2 Emmanuel J. Attinelli, *Numisgraphics, or a List of Catalogues, in Which Occur Coins or Medals, Which Have Been Sold by Auction in the United States, Also, a List of Catalogues or Price Lists of Coins, Issued by Dealers, Also, a List of Various Publications of More or Less Interest to Numismatologists, Which Have Been Published in the United States* (New York, 1876), p. 54. (Reprinted by Quarterman in 1976 as *A Bibliography of American Numismatic Auction Catalogues, 1828–1875*, with new material by John W. Adams.)

Writings of numismatic interest in subsequent issues include two articles by "Nemo," proceedings of the New England Numismatic and Archeological Society and the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal, a report on the "Mackensie" sale, an article on "Shell-Money" by R. E. C. Stearns, articles on "Copper Tokens" and "Curious Brunswick Dollars," and poems entitled "The Old Coin" and "The 'Bungtown.'" Interesting pieces on Massachusetts coinage were published under the initials H. E. W., identified by Charles Davis³ as Harlow Woodward, the son of W. Elliot Woodward. H. E. W. also contributed an article on "Our Half Cents."

The *Mercury*, like many similar publications of its day, also was a means of communication throughout the hobby. Trifet ran the following request from Sylvester S. Crosby: "Being engaged in studying, for the purpose of publication, the varieties of the Colonial coinage, I wish to ask [for] impressions in copper or tin foil of any fine or rare specimens." Ed Cogan even ran a request for assistance in cataloguing a few pieces from the Allan silver cabinet. A man of strong opinions, Trifet also made occasional comments at the expense of Ebenezer Mason (who replied in kind in his own magazine).

In 1869, Trifet had to defend himself against charges of stamp forgery, which makes for some interesting reading in Volume 2. The inclusion of numismatics apparently did little to increase circulation and the publication reverted to philatelic content only after July 1870, undoubtedly much to the satisfaction of Ebenezer Locke Mason. In the January 1871 issue of *Mason's Coin and Stamp Collectors' Magazine*, Mason noted that Trifet and Company had "gone up" and lamented the \$2 they owed him.

³ Bowers and Merena (Charles Davis, cataloguer), *The Armand Champa Library, Part 2* (Baltimore, March 23, 1995), lot 1489.

United States Auction Sales

The First Surge: Two Sales in Two Weeks in Two Cities (June 1855)

P. Scott Rubin

After the fanfare of the 1851 Lewis Roper collection sale, it might seem inevitable that more coin sales would appear. However this did not happen quickly. It would be over four years before the next significant coin-only sale would occur. Attinelli lists twelve sales of coins between the 1851 Roper Sale and the June 6, 1855, Flandin sale. Of these twelve, only two appear to be coin-only auctions: the April 22, 1851, Leonard & Co. sale of the D. E. Groux collection (realized only \$34.66) and the May 22, 1855, Thomas & Son addenda to three non-numismatic sales of May 20, 1855, and another non-numismatic addendum of May 22, 1855, of the Edward D. Ingraham collection (realized only \$28.50). Also of note is the E. H. Ludlow Sale of April 28, 1852, sale of the Philip Hone collection, which though mostly paintings realized \$1,004.33 for coins, medals, and numismatic books, out of a total of \$7,401.88 for the entire sale. The collection belonged to a former mayor of New York, Philip Hone.

The Flandin collection sold as “A Valuable Collection of American and Foreign Coins and Medals, in Gold, Silver, Copper and Bronze” on June 6, 1855 at 13 Park Row, New York City by Bangs Brothers & Co. The name Peter Flandin was not mentioned in the catalogue; this information is known today because of Emmanuel Joseph Attinelli’s landmark book *Numisgraphics*. This sale is significant for a few reasons. It was the first coin-only sale conducted by Bangs Bros. and Co. (they had also sold a lot of medals on December 24, 1846, when they were known as Bangs, Richards & Platt). It was the first to take place in New York City. It also appears to be only the second coin sale of which named and priced copies are known to exist (Bushnell is one of the listed buyers of U.S. coinage) and the first named and priced catalogue of a New York coin auction. Bangs & Co., known under various changes of name, would become one of the biggest auction houses in the United States and though various changes of ownership would have a direct connection to the current Sotheby’s of New York.

THE CONTENTS OF BANGS' JUNE 6, 1855, AUCTION

- Lots 1-35: Napoleon medals in bronze
- Lots 36-45: Bronze Napoleon medals (struck chiefly from private dies)
- Lots 46-82: English silver
- Lots 83-85: English proofs in silver
- Lots 86-88: English gold coins
- Lots 89-92: Scottish silver coins
- Lot 92a: Book—Hawkins' history and description of English silver coins
- Lots 93-100: English medals in bronze
- Lots 109-123: English copper coins
- Lots 124-125: Early English tradesmen's tokens from 1640 to 1660
- Lots 126-140: English tradesmen's tokens from 1790 to 1800
- Lot 140*: Book—Conder's arrangement of the above tokens, uncut copy
- Lots 141-157: American medals in bronze
- Lots 158-160: American silver medals
- Lots 161-168: American silver coins (highest price: lot 163, 1836 pattern silver dollar, \$4.50 to Bushnell)
- Lots 169-172: American proof coins in gold and silver (highest price: lot 170, 1838 pattern Flying Eagle dollar, \$8.50 to Bushnell)
- Lots 173-191: American copper coins (highest price: lot 179, 1781 *[[sic, presumably 1791]]* Washington 1 cent, \$5.50 to Howard)
- Lots 192-204: French medals in bronze
- Lots 205-211: Roman coins in silver and copper
- Lots 212-217: Copies of medals in soft metal
- Lots 218-230: Miscellaneous medals in bronze and silver

Six days after the first New York coin-only auction, M. Thomas & Son, the Philadelphia auction house that brought us the 1851 Roper sale, conducted its second coin-only auction. The sale was the A. C. Kline collection and like the Flandin sale of June 6 we only know the name of the collector because of Emmanuel Attinelli's 1876 book. The 100-page auction catalogue gives the impression of a much more important happening than the 1851 sale. Its cover has a beautiful engraved image of the M. Thomas & Son auction house, showing their name on the five-story building and a group of men and women gathered in front. The firm was then on North Fourth Street, not Walnut Street where it was in 1851.

The June 12 sale of the A. C. Kline collection appears to have been housed in a single coin cabinet, and the cataloguing of the sale was done

in the order of how the coins were stored. Mention is made in the catalogue of the drawers containing the lots.

This appears to be a very substantial collection, with 1712 lots plus addenda of 135 lots. No mention of mint marks is made in describing the coins; it is possible that all coins were from the Philadelphia Mint since the collection is of a Philadelphia collector. Like the 1851 Roper Sale a number of patterns appear in the sale, especially Flying Eagle silver dollars of the 1836-1839 issue. The sale also includes a complete 1854 proof set from half cent to double eagle, but the set is divided in different sections of the sale based on the coin's metal.

CONTENTS OF M. THOMAS & SON'S JUNE 12-13, 1855, SALE

Drawer 1

Lots 1 to 72^{3/4}: colonial, Hard Times tokens, medals, Washington tokens, patterns (1792 half disme included), pioneer gold, and Feuchtwanger tokens.

Lots 73-168: cents and half cents, 1793-1854 (the 1854 cent and half cent are proofs; the 1815 cent included must be a counterfeit).

Lots 169-254: gold U.S. coins starting with 1795 eagle and half eagle; quarter eagles start in 1830 and double eagles in 1850. Ends with 1854 proof double eagle, eagle, half eagle, 3 dollar, and gold dollar. The only 3 dollar is that of 1854.

Lots 255-439: silver coins starting in 1794 with half dollar and half dime. Ends with proof dollar, half dollar, quarter, dime, half dime, and 3-cent piece of 1854.

Drawer 4

Lots 440-574^{1/2}: English coins from 1066

Drawer 7

Lots 575-760: other foreign coins

Lots 761-779: pattern coins, some of which are U.S., and 1837 half cent Hard Times token. Includes 1836 pattern dollar with stars, pattern pioneer gold in silver (Pacific Company \$5), 1853 and 1854 pattern cents, and 1852 pattern holed dollar in silver.

Lots 780-1149: Roman silver coins

Lots 1150-1159: Roman gold coins

Lots 1160-1167: bronze medals, including one Franklin and three George Washington

Lots 1168-1309: bronze medals

Lots 1310-1374: silver medals

Lots 1375-1376: gold medals

Lots 1377-1664: bronze medals

Lots 1665-1679: coins and medals. Lot 1674 was a complete set of U.S. cents from 1793 to 1854 with a number of half cents. Lot 1675 was a large lot of cents and half cents. Lot 1676 was a large lot of U.S. colonial coins.

Lots 1680-1712: numismatic books (lot 1698, Eckfelt and Du Bois 1852; Lot 1711, Joseph Felt's book of 1839).

Addenda

Foreign coins and books but also includes A45, a Massachusetts Pine Tree shilling.

In the years between 1851 and 1855 about a dozen mostly insignificant coin sales took place in the United States, all taking place in only three northeastern cities: New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. It also appears that collectors in the early nineteenth-century United States were more interested in foreign and ancient coinage. In all three sales examined so far, the 1836-38 Flying Eagle pattern dollars were included in some way. The Kline collection shows more of an attempt to collect American coinage. It also shows that patterns of 1854 were available to collectors of the day (this is important because many believe that patterns were not available at time of mintage) and that a full proof set of 1854 was available to collectors, so 1856 was not, as some modern collectors believe, when proof sets started. It is more probable that there were just not many American collectors who cared about proof sets despite them being offered to collectors.

Also, during this time period of 1851 to 1855 a few catalogues of collections were written. Most notably, the coins and medals of the New York State Library in Albany were catalogued in 1853 by Richard W. Davids, a Philadelphia collector who had attended the 1851 Roper Sale. Others include the Historical Society of Maryland by D. E. Groux (1851), the Mercantile Library of New York (1852), the Barnum Museum in New York (1853), and the Maryland Historical Society (1854), to mention the most important ones.

So it can be seen there was not a big surge in auctions after the 1851 Roper Sale and that no coin auction house had yet developed in the United States up to 1855. Coin dealers, if any really existed by that year, were not making a living from the hobby.

Blessed Art Thou, Bibliography

D. Wayne Johnson

Once I appraised a fairly rare medallic item for the owner and ended up writing a fifteen-page document. My appraised value was under \$1,000; as such it did not deserve such a lengthy dissertation. But I got carried away. I could not find any recent auction sales of this item or similar items by the same artist. So I increased my effort. I overcompensated by digging deeper, finding dozens of published references.

The deeper I dug, however, the more interesting became the story about the item, the portrait subject, the artist, how it was made, and who made it. I learned of two collectors who had this item in their collections, and five public museums.

The Smithsonian's National Numismatic Collection and the ANS both had the item in their collections. The others were specialized museums. It was not die-struck but was an electrogalvanic cast (a "galvano" made by one of the founders of Medallic Art Company; this strengthened my research resolve).

I attached a list of the twenty-four published works I located with related data on the item and its artist. I didn't call it a bibliography. Some see more *éclat* now in calling it "resources." Call it what you wish—I hope the client tracks down some of these published citations. This will give him as much reading pleasure, I'm certain, as I have enjoyed in uncovering them.

But it brings to mind the importance of what has been previously published about a subject—any subject. The first thing a writer should do when approaching a fresh writing chore is *to do a literature search*.

There are numerous aids for book search and subject search these days. I rely on my own library and my own voluminous files first. Then

I turn to AbeBooks.com to see what books on the subject are currently for sale. There are so many dealers who list their stock on this site, it has millions of titles that have ever been published. You are almost certain to find something. The key is the choice of the subject keyword to ask.

Then I turn to the library catalogs of two numismatic organizations, the American Numismatic Association and the American Numismatic Society (DONUM). Their library holdings are on the Internet, easy to find. You may wish to ask their librarians. Identify yourself and your precise inquiry. They often have knowledge of special collections.

The next source is Google or Bing. The subject keyword is key. Then . . . think for yourself, where would you look? When I have tracked every lead and checked out every bibliography in those books, I turn to live people other than librarians.

I start asking myself who has special knowledge of this subject or this numismatic item. It's called "ask the expert." I find dealers often have extensive specialized knowledge. A brief inquiry often brings the most enlightening response. Dealers—if they have the spare time—delight in showing off how much specialized knowledge they do indeed possess.

But don't be a pest. Don't come back with twenty questions. Dig into the literature. If you wish, send that dealer a summary of what you have learned later, and ask if you have overlooked anything.

And don't overlook adding a list of books, articles, manuscripts, internet references, videos, films, everything related to the subject you wrote about, in your own writings. Be sure to add a bibliography, dude!

Answers to the Numismatic Quarterly Quiz (see page 78): 1) "I flee" (i.e., "time flies"). 2) Notgeld. 3) Silver 3 cents. 4) The Indian cent, starting in late 1864. 5) Sutler tokens. 6) 1873 (more specifically, Feb. 12, 1873). 7) Frank Gasparro. 8) \$100 treasury note of 1890 (and the \$1000 treasury note of 1890 is a grand watermelon). 9) Alexander Hamilton on the \$10 bill. 10) 1935 Connecticut 50 cents and 1999 Connecticut 25 cents. 11) William Jennings Bryan. 12) James F. Kelly.

The 2013 Annual Meeting of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society

Joel J. Orosz

The Numismatic Bibliomania Society's 34th annual meeting was held at the ANA convention on Friday, August 16, 2013, commencing at 11:30 am in Room 24 of the Donald Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, Illinois. In attendance were approximately forty hard-core bibliophiles, and the usual small complement of confused convention-goers seeking other meeting rooms (Room 24 being among the upper level of meeting rooms, there was no shortage of lost and wandering souls). Outgoing President Dan Freidus handed the gavel to newly elected President Marc Ricard, who certainly cannot be accused of being a Johnny-come-lately in numismatics; his coin-collecting pedigree can be traced through his father Charles (who was also in attendance at the meeting), back to his great-great grandfather John C. Lighthouse, who started collecting back in '60—in 1860!

Marc promptly introduced guest speaker Q. David Bowers. Dave, who had been surprised the day before with a party thrown by his associates to celebrate his 60th year as a professional numismatist, showed no signs of resting on his laurels, for he was double-booked for a luncheon in an adjoining room. Proving to be the original multi-tasker, he gave a little gem of a talk before slipping away to his other commitment.

Dave shared a brief, but fascinating history of the development of the hobby of collecting numismatic literature, starting with the early 1950s, when he developed a respectable numismatic library simply by saving literature that other collectors discarded. At the time, he could count all of the other serious collectors of numismatic books on his fingers, but the hobby developed rapidly, so that by 1981 George Frederick Kolbe's 9th numismatic literature auction was a front-page headline event in *Coin World*, and by the mid-1990s, the sale of Armand Champa's numismatic library required a suite of four major auctions by Bowers and Merena Galleries. Dave then dashed off, but not before leaving behind a series of

autographed copies of his books to be sold in the NBS fundraiser auction.

Annual awards came next on the agenda. By vote of the membership, the Jack Collins Award for best first-time author in *The Asylum* was presented to Chris Faulkner, for "The Man Who Slept in the Library of Parliament." The Joel J. Orosz NBS Writer's Award for best article in *The Asylum* was presented to Roger S. Siboni, John L. Howes, and Buell Ish, for "The Collectors and Their Collections: A Chapter from *The State Coinage of New Jersey*." The George Frederick Kolbe Award for lifetime achievement in numismatic literature was presented, appropriately enough, to past President Dan Hamelberg, not only for the creation of his superb library, absolutely unmatched for the breadth and depth of its U.S. numismatic literature, but also for his many efforts, usually orchestrated quietly behind the scenes, to support numismatic bibliomania. The accompanying medal, designed by Charles and Marc Ricard, was much admired, but after passing through many hands, ended up with its deserving recipient at last. Dan becomes the fourth winner of the Kolbe award, following in the footsteps of George Frederick Kolbe himself (2010), John W. Adams (2010), and the late Al Hoch (2011). (No Kolbe Award was bestowed in 2012.)



NBS President Marc Ricard presenting the George Frederick Kolbe Award to Dan Hamelberg (photo courtesy of Dan Freidus).

The report from Treasurer David Sundman showed the NBS again firmly in the black, albeit with a smaller surplus than in past years, due to smaller intakes at recent NBS benefit auctions, and also to the very popular decision to begin printing *The Asylum* in full color. Consequently, the NBS board made a decision to raise the annual membership dues for the first time since 1988 (although the raised dues of \$20 U.S. and \$25 foreign remain among the lowest of numismatic specialty clubs). The increase will take effect January 1, 2014, so all renewals accomplished before that date will be at the old rate of \$15 per year U.S. and \$20 foreign. Given the fact that the last dues increase had occurred during the second Reagan administration, the general feeling among NBS members in the room was that one small increase every 25 years represented prudent fiscal management!

Other speakers then took the podium. Elizabeth Hahn (who became, with her accession to the Vice Presidency, the first female elected officer in NBS history), spoke in her capacity as ANS Librarian to thank the NBS for our annual donation, as did Kendra Johnson, ANA Library Manager. Bill Bugert then spoke on lessons he had learned as a writer, photographer, editor, and publisher of a series of highly regarded books on Liberty Seated coinage. Among the most important of these lessons regarded the photography of coins, and Bill offered to share the plans for the creation of his highly effective home photography studio, which he assembled for less than \$1,000, with any interested NBS member.

The meeting closed with the traditional benefit auction. Seven donors (Dan Hamelberg, David Sundman, Q. David Bowers, Bill Swoger, Paul Franklin, the firm of Kolbe & Fanning, and the American Numismatic Society), contributed more than thirty lots of books. Past President Freidus returned to the podium to call the auction, ably assisted by “Danna” Hamelberg, who showcased the lots with verve. Their combined efforts bore fruit, for NBS members (led by aggressive bidding among the likes of David Fanning, Len Augsburger, and Tom Harrison), bid the lots up to \$3,500 for the benefit of the Club.

The ink was hardly dry on the checks of successful bidders before President Ricard concluded the meeting with a reminder that we will reassemble next year in “beautiful downtown Rosemont” for the NBS’s 35th annual meeting, and invited all members to attend and make it a memorable celebration.

The 2013 NBS Symposium: Karl Moulton and the “Franklin Hoard”

Elizabeth Hahn

On Thursday, August 15, 2013, the Numismatic Bibliomania Society Symposium welcomed guest speaker Karl Moulton, who spoke about his new book, *John J. Ford, Jr. and the “Franklin Hoard”* (fig. 1). There was a good crowd of thirty to forty audience members in attendance, and Moulton spoke for about 30 minutes followed by a good 30 minutes of questions and further discussion.

Moulton’s book generated some buzz in the numismatic community when it was released this summer because of the focus of the subject matter, which has been of interest to many over the past few decades (not to mention the book’s hefty 8-pound weight!). The book presents a good deal of documentation relating to the debates surrounding the Franklin Hoard and John J. Ford, Jr. As Moulton repeatedly stressed during his presentation, this was not his story, but Ford’s, and he was simply bringing all of the documentation together. In doing so, he tried to remain objective and did not attempt to authenticate or condemn any of the pieces, only to demonstrate the facts. Moulton discussed that his own interest in the Hoard started back in 1967, after John J. Ford, Jr., wrote a lengthy document in an attempt to defend the authenticity of certain 1853 United States Assay Office of Gold proof \$20 gold coins. One of these coins had been the focus of a Professional Numismatics Guild arbitration hearing the previous year, in which the arbitrators failed to agree on the genuineness of those particular pieces. The resulting conflict ignited an interest in Moulton to fully explore the controversy and bring together the facts. Those facts are presented in Moulton’s book as a series of photographs, reproductions of articles, original letters, postcards, coins, auction catalogs, and various other media.

During his presentation, Moulton stressed that he really tried to be objective when writing the book, which was intended to bring together

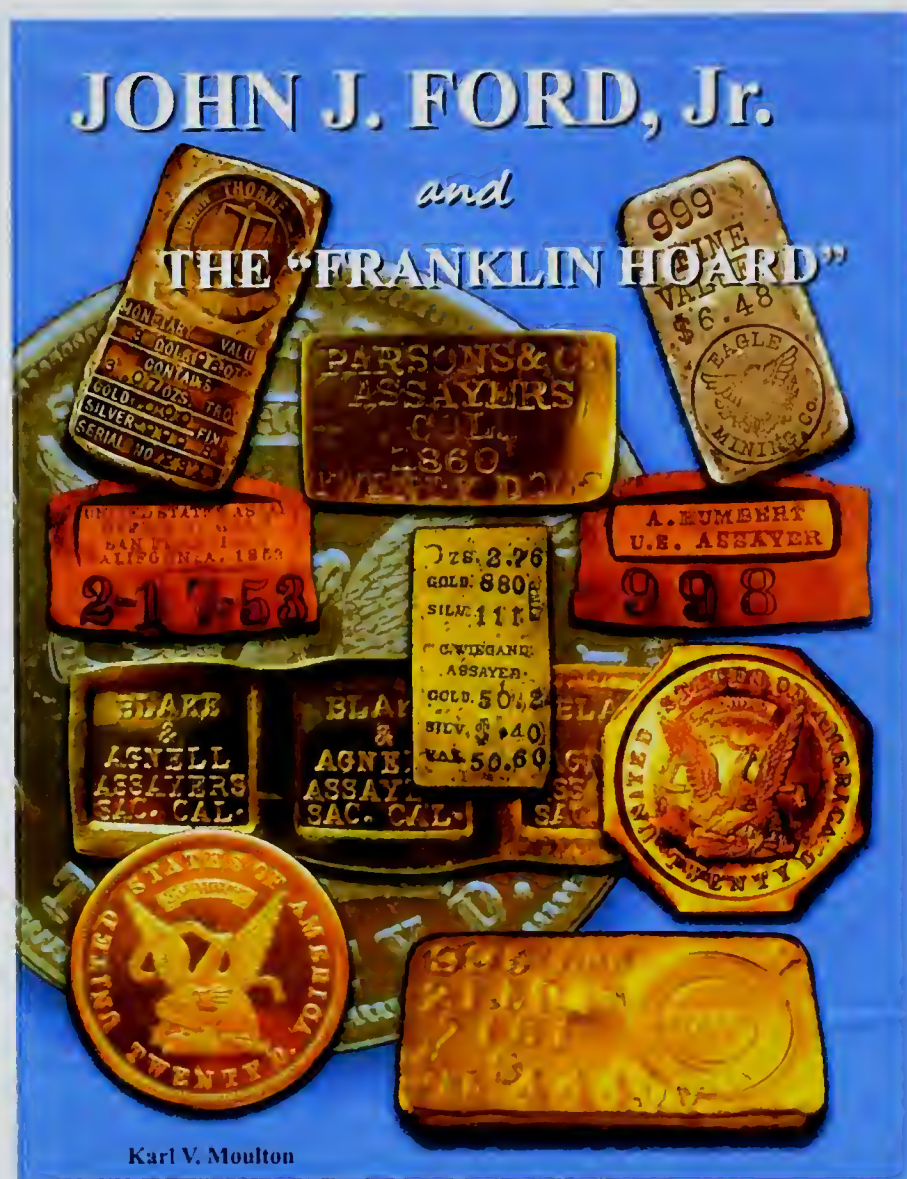


Figure 1. Cover of Karl Moulton's *John J. Ford, Jr. and the "Franklin Hoard"*.

all of the documents about the controversy. His real goal was to tell the story by presenting the original documentation while remaining as neutral as possible, despite the majority opinion that the items are modern fabrications. When pressed by audience members to expand on his personal opinions, he appeared to hold the majority view. Questions from the audience floated around Moulton's interest in the topic and the specifics of certain pieces.

At one point, there was an audience question that mentioned the 1999 ANA Chicago "Great Debate" (between Michael Hodder and Theodore Buttrey), which was recorded on VHS tapes, copies of which

are preserved at the ANS Library as well as in the private collections of various individuals. As someone who is rather far removed from the actual events of the 1999 ANA Convention, I was curious to glimpse this debate. After overcoming the challenge of finding a machine to play VHS tapes, which are a recording format that is very quickly becoming obsolete, I watched part of the 1999 recording. (In fact, the exercise of watching these VHS tapes made me think about the challenges of reformatting for libraries today. When limited financial resources are available, how do we decide what we should reformat? To what extent is it necessary to pursue reformatting something like this at the present time when the media type is not yet completely obsolete? These are questions I hope to address in the near future!). The recordings were full of familiar faces and the presentation room did not look much different than the present-day convention-center room. However there was a very clear tension in the air that continued through the end of the question-and-answer session. Based on this tension, it became obvious to me how deeply this issue affected many of those in the standing-room-only audience.

In sum, once again the NBS succeeded in organizing an interesting event that generated lively discussion during Moulton's presentation at the NBS Symposium. His book brings together so many of the original sources that document this hoard and its long history and will no doubt be an important reference for the numismatic community.

Book Review

Jon P. Amato, *The Draped Bust Half Dollars of 1796-1797: Numismatic Background and Census*. Dallas, Tex.: Heritage Auctions, 2012.

OVERVIEW

Large, in-depth works on narrow or esoteric subjects are almost always a labor of love. The title listed above is one such example. The work is a compilation of information gathered together by Mr. Amato over the course of more than fifteen years. In his own words he states, "A major goal of the study is to arrive at a census, if only preliminary, of the extant population of 1796-1797 halves. Additionally, the numismatic background of the series has been examined, including the economic and historical talk contacts within which 1796-1797 half dollars were designed and minted, and circulated in the channels of commerce (or conversely, escaped extensive or complete circulation)."

In reaching its goals, it provides a pictorial condition census of the Overton die marriages of 1796 and 1797 half dollars and delineates the existing population of the four die marriages employed in producing the coins with these dates as well as their grade distribution. This compilation was gathered and researched by Mr. Amato and published in cooperation with Heritage Auctions.

This endeavor of almost 340 pages begins with three pages of acknowledgments, then delves into the origins of the Draped Bust design (covering five pages) and then the purported genesis of the 1796 and 1797 half dollars themselves. It next covers each of the die marriages listed in the Overton book on half-dollar die marriages in detail, including the various die cracks that developed.

Included in the next section is a listing of all of the known collections that contained all four of the known die marriages for these years. This is followed by a small section recounting interesting anecdotes written about these coins.

A section delineating the author's research methodology is next, explaining to the reader the criteria used in collecting the information

contained in this tome. Previous rarity rating and condition estimates are discussed as well as a new enhanced grading standard just for these particular coins.

The meat and potatoes of the book are encompassed in the next 288 pages, which give a pictorial condition census along with a pedigree listing of all the examples the author could trace, sold by auction or fixed-price list over the last 150 years. Additional specimens residing in institutional collections were also added.

Each example is given its own page with a color picture of both the obverse and reverse of the coin and a listing below of the previous owners and auction appearances. These pages are arranged in sections by die marriage and in order from highest to lowest grade, with a unique number given to each example for future reference.

Following the pictorial census is a condensed section of the research findings, including a table by die marriage and grade distribution. The last section is a summary and conclusion of the findings by Mr. Amato. There are two pages of reference listings next, followed by an "about the author" section to conclude the book.

EVALUATION

First the good

This is a very valiant first effort on a very esoteric subject, and any endeavor such as this takes many, many hours of research and study to produce a worthwhile end product. As such it is a rousing success in my opinion. Most of the original goals of his study were indeed reached and in some ways surpassed. I applaud Mr. Amato for his groundbreaking achievement and I believe that this will be a well-used and welcome addition to the numismatic research community and especially to Bust half collectors.

Now for the not so good

I believe that the book has several shortcomings, as well as areas that could have been greatly improved upon with very little effort expended.

First and foremost is the production style of the book. Most likely due to being printed in conjunction with Heritage, it has been produced in the same manner as an auction catalog, with a glued "perfect" binding spine that will deteriorate easily with repeated use. This binding also makes it more difficult to lay the book flat when opened without

the possibility of breaking the spine. A much more user-friendly and longer-lasting option would have been a spiral-bound edition or, even better, an actual hardbound edition. I took my copy and had it spiral-bound with the covers laminated for less than eight dollars at my local office supply store.

Secondly, the pages of each unique coin listing have the pictures of the coins at approximately two times the normal size of a half dollar. While this is better than a picture of just the actual size, there is ample room to have increased the size by three or four more times, making it much easier to recognize individual coins and their die markers. Of course some of the pictures from older catalogs are not as sharp as newer ones and making them larger will only reveal this more; still I believe larger would have been better. In addition, the provenance listings are hard to read and follow, and would be clearer if they were listed on one line for each ownership; there is ample room on each page for this.

The next item is the breaking of the 1797 O-101 and O-101A into two separate sections rather than one. In my opinion this should not have been done. Why this was done is not made clear within the text, as Overton also lists two different die stages for the 1796 O-102 as well. Why do this for one die marriage but not for both? What was the purpose behind this? Following through with this decision adds confusion as to the total 1797 O-101 halves that still exist and in what grade they can be found, due to them being separated by die stage and in two different sections. It also makes the findings listed in the back harder to disseminate without combining information. It may have been better to treat this in a different manner in a separate section in the back of the book if it needed to be presented both ways.

Speaking of the back of the book, it is here that we find a chapter showing the research findings. This includes a table that summarizes the census of each die marriage, but again we find the 1797 O-101 broken into two sections, which would need to be combined together to get an accurate accounting of that die marriage. In addition, the table headings for the 1796 marriages are listed by the number of obverse stars, rather than their Overton number. While a small item, it does not follow the format of the other items presented in this table, which are listed by Overton die marriage numbers.

While there is a reference section listed in the back of the book, there is no index. Including one would allow a collector or researcher to easily

find a coin owned by a particular individual (such as Eliasberg, Garrett, etc.) or sold by a particular auction company. This would have been an easy thing to add and is always a valuable tool for future research. (Other authors take note!)

One of the biggest areas that I believe needs further exploration, explanation and research was not even touched upon within this work. This was the use of a fractional denomination on the reverse dies used to produce the four known die marriages of these two years. Only one sentence is devoted to this fact. Not one word of explanation is mentioned as to why the previous year (1795) showed no denomination on the reverse or that when the new Heraldic Eagle reverse was employed (1801), again there was no denomination stated on the reverse. Why this was added only for 1796 and 1797 is a total mystery that has never been adequately explained or researched in any past work. Neither Beistle nor Overton made any mention as to why this was done, but merely stated what was visible on these reverse dies.

Although the author may not have expended any effort in this area, it would have been prudent to have at least mentioned the subject so that others might carry the torch further towards enlightenment. (The reviewer is currently working on this research and hopes to publish something in the near future.)

CONCLUSIONS

Please don't get me wrong here, I am not trying to bash the book or the author. All in all, even with the shortcomings listed above, this new addition to the numismatic literature family is a welcome treat to the collector or Bust half enthusiast and is highly recommended as an addition to any library. Let it be said that most end users of this type of material never truly understand how much time, effort, energy, enthusiasm, and hard work go into such a work as this, but hopefully they can appreciate the end result.

—Steve M Tompkins

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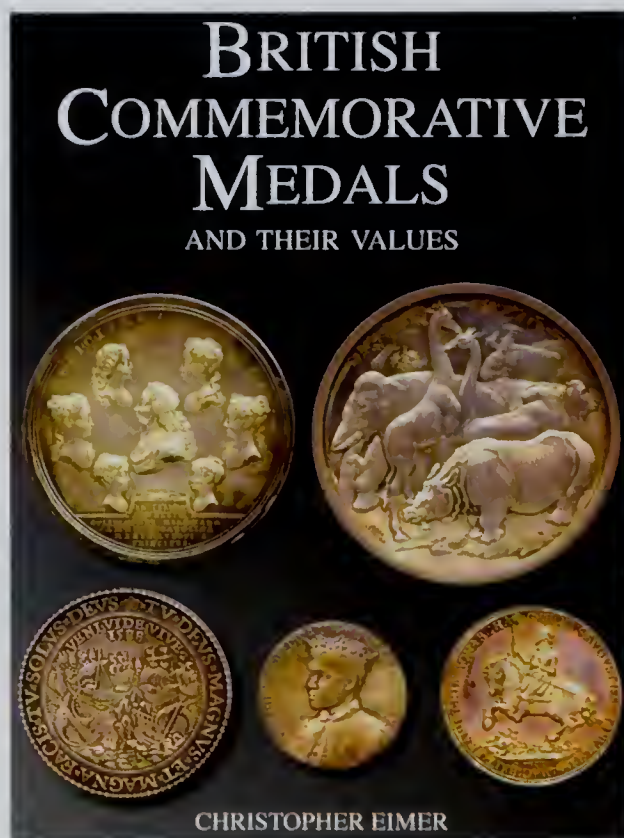
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